

CEREMONY REPORT

STUART HIGHWAY NORTH



CEREMONY REPORT

STUART HIGHWAY NORTH

4 December 2007

1. General Description

The arrangement for the Chief Minister to unveil the plaque had been in place for a couple of months however there was a change in Chief Minister two weeks before the ceremony. The new Chief Minister, Paul Henderson, was able to take over the appointment. The Department of Planning and Infrastructure made arrangements for the mounting of the plaque, and for the hire of the marque. This was arranged with minimal input from EA. The assistance from the department was of a very high order.

The ceremony was conducted during the Build-up to the Wet Season so we had to plan for possible rain and very hot conditions on the site. In the event it was fine during the ceremony although very humid.

The ceremony was held in a metal-framed marquee 9 x 6 metres in floor area. The threat of rain made this a good decision again. Sufficient plastic chairs had been hired to accommodate the 50 guests. The marquee was located over the plinth on which the plaque was mounted so that the unveiling could occur within the marquee and in the shade.

The plaque was mounted on a permanent Mount Bundy granite boulder approximately 1500 mm high. The plaque had been permanently mounted on the boulder prior to the event. The plaque had been recessed into the stone to make it virtually impossible to remove.

A piece of loose fabric was used to unveil the plaque. This proved to be of insufficient size and needed to be temporarily weighted to keep it in place. This should be improved for future events.

Cold water was made available for guests in a drink cooler. Light food and drinks were made available after the ceremony.

Total attendance is estimated at 50 persons including some students and staff of the Parap Primary School and Darwin High School. Four EA staff members were in attendance.

2. Site Safety

The site was relatively safe and no special provisions were made. There was adequate car parking in the Winnellie Shopping Centre car park immediately adjacent to the site. There is a road (the entrance to the RAAF Base) between the car park and the ceremony site but it is not subject to heavy traffic. There was no need for guests to go near the heavier traffic on the Stuart Highway adjacent to the western side of the site.

3. Preliminary Arrangements

The following arrangements for invitations were made:

- A ceremony invitation was designed and printed by the EA office. A horizontal format of 3 invitations per A4 sheet printed on light coloured card was adopted (see Attachment A).
- A database of invitation names and addresses was developed using the Adelaide River plaquing ceremony list as a starting point. The result was a mailing list consisting of:

○ Custom addresses for this event (see Attachment B)	212
○ EA Division addresses excluding Interstate and overseas members & members other than Darwin and Katherine	350
TOTAL MAILED	562

- There were subsequently about 30 positive responses to the invitation and a similar number of apologies.

4. Other Arrangements

Other arrangements were made as follows:

- The EA PA system was used.
- Insurance. Insurance was not an issue and no special arrangements were made.
- Funding. Department of Planning and Infrastructure paid for all the hired facilities and morning tea.
- Arrangements were made with the Office of the Chief Minister for them to arrange the following:
 - Invitations to the press
 - Writing of the speech for the Chief Minister. The speech notes for the Chief Minister are at Attachment C

- Detailed arrangements for the order of the program
- Bronwyn Russell acted as Master of Ceremonies.
- Speech Notes were prepared for myself to address the Plaquing Program aspects (see Attachment C).
- A technical handout document was prepared based on the Nomination document. 20 copies were printed which proved to be too few (see Attachment D).
- A Press Release (see Attachment E) was made by Engineers Australia.

5. The Ceremony

The ceremony started almost exactly on time.

The ceremony took about 25 minutes.

Both ABC and Channel 9 TV crews attended.

6. Post-Ceremony Actions

Eight thank you letters were sent (see copies at Attachment F)

A number of photographs were taken by Owen Peake during the ceremony (see Attachment G).

I have written an article for Northern Division Newsletter and another one Engineers Australia magazine of about 650 words. (see copies at Attachments H & I)

7. List of Attachments

- | | |
|---|--|
| A | Invitation |
| B | Custom Address List |
| C | Owen Peake Speech Notes |
| D | Technical Handout Document |
| E | Engineers Australia Press Release |
| F | Thank You letters |
| G | Photographs |
| H | Article for Northern Division Newsletter |
| I | Article for Engineers Australia Magazine |

OWEN PEAKE

4 June 2008

Copies:

- EHA Secretariat, National Office (to Helen Slat)
- Bruce Cole, Heritage Recognition Committee Convenor
- Northern Division Heritage File
- Ernie Wanka, Department of Planning and Infrastructure
- Michael Wells, Heritage Branch
- Owen Peake

Total copies required = 6

ATTACHMENT A



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

Engineers Australia Northern Division

In Conjunction with
Chief Minister, Clare Martin
Takes great pleasure in inviting you
to the Historic Engineering Plaquing Ceremony for the

Stuart Highway North

At 9.30am on Tuesday December 4th 2007 at the RAAF Gates Winnellie

RSVP to Justine Whittington on 8981 4137 or jwhittington@engineersaustralia.org.au

Proudly sponsored by



**Northern Territory
Government**



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AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

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ATTACHMENT B

VIP Invitation list for Plauing Event of the Stuart Highway North

Policy Title	Minister for	First Name	Surname	Address	Suburb	Postcode
The Honorable Clare Ma	Chief Minister	Clare	Martin	GPO Box 3146	Darwin	NT 0801
	Chief Ministers office people					
The Honorable Paul Heni	Minister for Employment, Education	Paul	Henderson	GPO Box 3146	Darwin	NT 0801
His Worship the Lord Ma	Lord Mayor Darwin	Gary	Lambert	GPO Box 84	Darwin	NT 0801
The Hon David Tollner M	Federal Member for Solomon	David	Tollner	GPO Box 2163	Darwin	NT 0801
His Worship the Mayor	Mayor of Palmerston	Robert	McCloud	PO Box 1	Palmerston	NT 0831
Senator Trish Crossin	Member of the Senate	Trish	Crossin			
The Honorable Delia Law	Minister for Planning & Lands	Delia	Lawrie	PO Box 662	Sanderson	NT 0813
Senator Nigel Scullion	Member of the Senate	Nigel	Scullion	GPO Box 3146	Darwin	NT 0801
The Hon Kon Vatskalis	Minister for Business & Economic De	Kon	Vatskalis	PO Box 41269	Casuarina	NT 0811
Ms Jodeen Carney	Leader of the Opposition	Jodeen	Carney	PO Box 2654	Alice Springs	NT 0811
The Hon Chris Natt MLA	Minister for Primary Industries & Fis	Chris	Natt	GPO Box 3146	Darwin	NT 0801
Rolfe Hartley	Engineers Australia National Preside	Rolfe	Hartley	11 National Circuit	Barton	ACT 2600
Peter Taylor	Engineers Australia Chief Executive	Peter	Taylor	11 National Circuit	Barton	ACT 2600
	Department of Planning and Infrastructure					
The Hon Warren Snowde	Member for Lingiari	Warren	Snowden	GPO Box 1596,	Darwin	NT 0801
National Trust NT - Direc	Elizabeth Close	Elizabeth	Close	GPO Box 3520	Darwin	NT 0801
National Trust NT - Chair	Jan Hills	Jan	Hills	GPO Box 3520	Darwin	NT 0802
Litchfield	Mary Walshe	Mary	Walshe	PO Box 446	Humpty Doo	NT 0836
Pine Creek				PO Box 144	Pine Creek	NT 0847
Tennant Creek				PO Box 821	Tennant Creek	NT 0861
Coomalie	Bill Roberts	Bill	Roberts	PO Box 20	Batchelor	NT 0845
Katherine				PO Box 1071	Katherine	NT 0851
	Mick Ryan					
	Brigadier Craig W. Orme, CSC,					
Senior Army person	ADC Commander					
Federal Department of Ei	CEO and minister and divisional heads			Building 101	Palmerston	NT 0830
CDU	Helen Garnett	Helen	Garnett	Charles Darwin Univ	Darwin	NT 0909
Department of Veterans Affairs				PO Box 3374	Palmerston	NT 0831
NT Chamber of Commerce				GPO Box 1825	Darwin	NT 0801
RSL						
Museums and Arts Galler	Talk to Natalie			PO Box 30	Palmerston	NT 0831
RAIA		Gavin Sells	Sells	GPO Box 1017	Darwin	NT 0801
NT Mineralis		Kezia Purick	Purick	GPO Box 510	Darwin	NT 0801
Tourism Top End		Mr Tony Clementson	Clementson	GPO Box 4392	Darwin	NT 0801
Tourist Commission				GPO Box 1155	Darwin	NT 0801

Policy Title	Minister for	First Name	Surname	Address	Suburb	Postcode
Aviation Historical Society		Peter	Radtke	PO Box 37621	Winnellie	NT 0821
Heritage Advisory Council Chair person				PO Box 30	Palmerston	NT 0831
Historical Society of NT				PO Box 40544	Casuarina	NT 0811
Freightlink	Regional Manager	Scott	Key	PO Box 39819	Winnellie	NT 0821
Mick Bowman				135 Jefferies Road	Humpty Doo	
The Hon Gerry Wood MLA				Nelson Electorate Of Howard Springs Shopping Cen		
Judy Richardson				PO Box 3504	Darwin	NT 0801
Peter & Estelle Cornell				PO Box 3504	Darwin	NT 0801
Alf & Ethel Williams				PO Box 3504	Darwin	NT 0801
Leo Izod				PO Box 3504	Darwin	NT 0801
Fran Briggs				PO Box 3504	Darwin	NT 0801
Friends of North Australia Railway				PO Box 3504	Darwin	NT 0801
				PO Box 3504	Darwin	NT 0801

ATTACHMENT C

**SPEECH NOTES – OWEN PEAKE
STUART HIGHWAY UNVEILING CEREMONY
4 DECEMBER 2007
RAAF GATES DARWIN**

- **Engineers Australia operates a National Plaquing Program.**
- **Sites marked range from such iconic places as the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme. It also includes many sites of engineering heritage significance which are probably less well known by the general public.**
- **This unveiling is the 136th site in this program (which has been going for over 23 years) and the fourth site located in the Northern Territory – the other three are:**
 - **the Overland Telegraph**
 - **Stokes Hill Steam-driven Oil Pump House**
 - **1888 Adelaide River Railway Bridge**
- **There are many more sites in the Northern Territory which deserve recognition and the Heritage Committee of the Northern Division of Engineers Australia is currently working its way through a short list of 17 sites. These include very important sites such as:**
 - **The North Australia Railway**
 - **Charles Point Lighthouse**
 - **Manton Dam**
- **We hope to add further markers to the Stuart Highway similar to this one. We are currently talking to the Department of Planning & Infrastructure about markers at Katherine Low Level Crossing, near the Tennant Creek Telegraph Station and at the Tropic of Capricorn lay-by north of Alice Springs. All of these sites lay on the original route of the Stuart Highway as it was built during the Second World War.**

ATTACHMENT D



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

CHALLENGING TERRAIN NO MATCH FOR ENGINEERING INGENUITY



The concept and design of the Stuart Highway began in 1870 by the South Australian Government. Between 1911 and 1978 the Commonwealth and various state government departments utilised in house resources and consultants to continue development. The Northern Territory Government took responsibility for construction from 1978.

The highway began in 1870 as a supply track along the Overland Telegraph and over 130 years later, it is now the Stuart Highway as we know it today.

The Stuart Highway North connects Alice Springs with Darwin via numerous small towns and the two major centres of Tennant Creek and Katherine. The explorer John Mc Douall Stuart, on his third attempt, crossed the continent of Australia from Port Augusta to the north coast arriving 20 miles east of the mouth of the Adelaide River on 24 July 1862. Stuart's Reports spoke highly of the potential of the country that he had traversed and based on Stuart's advice South Australia had the land to its north excised and on 6 July 1863 the Northern Territory became the responsibility of South Australia¹⁴. In 1871 the Overland Telegraph line was constructed linking Port Augusta and the southern states with the recently established settlement of Palmerston. The undersea cable connecting Australia to the world through Java came ashore at Palmerston on Port Darwin. The Overland Telegraph followed the route taken by Stuart for a substantial proportion of its 1765-mile length.

The alignment of the telegraph was kept cleared of trees, maintenance and resupply of stores for the telegraphers at the Repeater Stations, meant that traffic along the route was ongoing and "The Overland" became established. Any Travellers, Drivers, Adventurers & Overlanders crossing the continent followed the Overland Telegraph Line further adding to the development of the road.

The discovery of gold at Tennant Creek in 1934 lead to increased traffic from Alice Springs. The road was upgraded to partially gravelled and partially formed in response to the last Australian gold rush. Over the next six years the road north of Tennant Creek was improved, new road alignments pegged and reconnaissance surveys carried out through to Birdum.

The desire of the South Australian government to construct a transcontinental railway lead to railways being constructed north from Adelaide to Port Augusta in 1878, to Marree in 1884, Oodnadatta in 1891 and Alice Springs in 1929. South from Darwin a railway was built to Pine Creek in 1889, to Emungalan, on the northern bank of the Katherine River, in 1917 and to Birdum in 1929. The alignment of the railways were selected on an engineering basis therefore in the north the railway alignment was different from that of the telegraph. New telephony circuits when installed were constructed along the railway. Past the railheads the track along the telegraph alignment continued to be the route followed by those travelling north or south.

The NT Governments publication "Transport in the Territory Still Making History" states that in 1897 a J.J.Murif rode a bicycle across the continent following the telegraph.

Mrs Aeneas "Jeannie" Gunn in her book "We of the Never Never" details a trip in 1902 from Palmerston to Elsey Station. She travelled by train to Pine Creek and then by horse and buck-board to Elsey Homestead near Warloch Ponds. Chapter 5 of her book contains a description of the "Transcontinental Route". The book contains a photograph of "The Overland in 1900" a very early image of "The Track". She also describes the alternatives of crossing the flooded Fergusson in the "HMS Immovable" a half-ton iron punt provided by the government or "the wire" a flying fox.

The first crossing of the continent south to north by a horseless carriage was by Henry Dutton and Murray Auger. In 1907 they made their first unsuccessful attempt in a Talbot. They were successful on August 20 1908 when they reached Darwin in a second "especially imported" Talbot. The "2100 mile trip principally following the telegraph line" took 42 days.

The establishment of pastoral properties and the need to get cattle to markets lead to the development of a network of stock routes across the Territory. The North South stock route followed the telegraph line over most of its length.

On February 12 1907 the Commonwealth Government reached an agreement with the South Australian Government on the future administration of the Northern Territory. This resulted in the Commonwealth of Australia taking over responsibility for the Northern Territory on 1 January 1911. The Commonwealth carried out surveys of the major Northern Territory roads and stock routes and performed upgrading works and made improvements on the road and stock routes.

The introduction of air services from Australia to Asia and Europe in 1930 resulted in the development of Daly Waters as a major airport and refuelling stop where through flights by ANA, QANTAS and Guinea Airways connected with the Mac Robertson Miller service to Western Australia. A substantial hanger, minor structures, fuel and other stores were transported via the telegraph track from the railheads to Daly Waters.

The D of I purchased a single experimental AEC road train in 1935 the rig consisted of a prime mover and two trailers. The rated load was 15 tons resulting in a light axle load. The road train provided reliable economical transport during each dry season. The Top End of the Northern Territory was not unlike an island with supplies arriving by ship and then transported inland by rail, bullock dray and truck.

In the north an access road had been developed to provide access to the Manton Dam construction site and the water pipe line alignment from the dam to Darwin. Manton Dam was being developed by the Department of Defence to provide fresh water for Navy ships bunkering in Darwin. An extension of the road alignment from Manton River to Adelaide River had been identified by the Department of the Interior (D of I) and partly constructed.

The looming outbreak and subsequent declaration of war lead to the identification by the Department of Defence of the need for a road connection between the railheads at Alice Springs and Birdum to enable the north of Australia to be supplied and defended. A request was made by the

Commonwealth Government for the assistance of the state road authorities to rapidly construct a road from Tennant Creek to Birdum. An inspection was carried out and a proposal put forward which would have the Queensland Department of Main Roads (Qld DMR), South Australian Highways and Local Government Department (SA HD) and New South Wales Department of Main Roads (NSW DMR) carry out the upgrading.

Equipment and men were mobilised and the road from Tennant Creek to Larrimah a distance of 322 miles was upgraded to formed gravel road over the period September to December 1940.

The Army recognised that wet season access by road to the Birdum railhead would be difficult so a new location on the railway for the transshipment of material from truck to train was selected 5 miles further north. The name Larrimah was adopted and most of the infrastructure, including the hotel, was relocated from Birdum to Larrimah.



The construction of the Overland Telegraph required access and the on going resupply of the telegraph repeater stations created a track along the route of the telegraph. The alignment was kept cleared of regrowth and minor "improvements" were made over time to creek and river crossing approaches.

Charles Todd as the South Australian Superintendent of Posts and Telegraphs and person responsible for the construction of the telegraph therefore represented the first of the construction and maintenance authorities. Initially The Track, during the Overland Telegraph construction, had minimal standards for construction and materials. Hand tools to clear vegetation, remove trees, stumps and anthills were the initial construction equipment. Fire ploughs, a Vee shaped screed, dragged initially by teams of camels, bullocks or horses and finally by truck or tractor were used from 1900 onwards.

Improvements to the track beside the telegraph were carried out by the South Australian government to enable prospectors and miners to gain access to the gold fields south of Port Darwin. John George Knight utilising Chinese under the direction of Foreman McNamee made improvements to the road and constructed six bridges.

Once motor vehicles commenced following the track further improvements were made to the approaches to creek and river crossings. Roads were still constructed by removing trees stumps and anthills by manual labour with fire ploughs towed by horse, camel or bullock teams being used to provide a better surface. On boggy and sandy sections cleared timber was layed in corduroy fashion to enable traffic to traverse the area without bogging. Spinnifex was used in the south to enable sandy country and creek beds to be crossed.

It was reported by the Administrator in 1924 that "the roads and the water supply on the stock routes of the Territory ... have never been as good as they are at present" "Roads in the Territory were considered good if an average speed of 25km/hr could be achieved and satisfactory if 15km/hr were possible."

In 1928 the Commission set up to administer Northern Australia reported that the 5500km of roads under its responsibility "cannot be regarded generally speaking as of a higher standard than bush tracks". Roads were not constructed to be used during the wet season. The Commission had the opinion that "any attempt to make sections of the most important roads suitable for wet season transportation would be unwarranted at present."

Once the road north of Tennant was improved, more development was planned.

The construction of a dam on the Manton River south of Darwin to provide water suitable for use in naval vessels lead to the development of a road from Darwin to Manton River. D D Smith the D of I Engineer had identified a new road alignment from Manton River to Adelaide River.



Responsibility for The Track was taken over by the Department of Defence Army in 1940 and not handed back to civil control until 1945. Major construction and upgrading works were carried out during this period using the resources of the Army, Department of the Interior, Allied Works Council, SA HD, NSW DMR, Qld MRC, CRB and a

USA Army Engineer Battalion. The Civil Construction Corps and the Civil Alien Corps provided labour.

The Commonwealth authorities approached the NSW, SA and Qld governments for assistance in constructing a gravel road from Tennant Creek to Birdum on 25 July 1940. The SA Engineer for Highways and the Chief Engineer DMR NSW along with D. D. Smith D of I Major Dixon Army and Lt Hislop of the Darwin Overland Supply Unit inspected the proposed road in 1940. The Qld MRC could not get an engineer to attend in the limited time available. A Report was prepared by the two State engineers detailing the climate, existing conditions of roads, railways and other logistics.

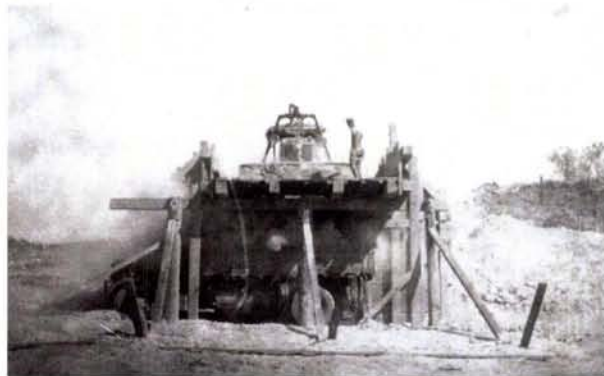
The 1940 upgrading of the track from Tennant Creek to Larimah for defence purposes consisted of clearing, formation and drainage works. The State Road Authorities mobilised large amounts of plant and equipment to carry out the initial upgrading of the highway from flat bladed track to formed gravel road. Equipment included tractors, bulldozers, end loaders, tip trucks, drawn scoops (scrapers) and water carts.

All authorities brought end loaders to assist with loading gravel, hand loading was considered by one authority but was not used, as it would be too slow! The end loaders were slow and mechanically unreliable so chinamen structures, constructed from locally available materials, were utilised by all authorities to load gravel into trucks using scoops and bulldozers.

The SA HD was involved in the 1940 ninety-day upgrading of 127 miles of the road from Tennant Creek to Ferguson's Springs. It was recorded in the Report by the SA Engineer for Highways and the Chief Engineer DMR NSW that "This length is greater than the other two sections, but there are less difficulties to overcome as the location and clearing is practically complete and a proportion of the construction partially complete."

The Qld MRC was involved in the 1940 ninety-day upgrading of 90 miles from Ferguson's Springs to Milners Lagoon. Queensland mobilised 76 items of plant and 180+ personnel. The work was completed on 6 December. The Queensland organisation maintained their section until 31 December 1941.

The NSW DMR was involved in the 1940 ninety-day 86-mile construction from Milners Lagoon to Larrimah. The RAAF provided a plane for the surveyors to fly over the country to get an appreciation of the country they were to traverse. Ground surveys then commenced with some areas of the country being cross-sectioned using the telegraph line as a base. The NSW DMR maintained their works until 31 December 1941.



The NSW DMR in March 1941 at the request of the Army undertook a survey to determine the most suitable location for a road from Darwin to Larrimah. The existing track from Darwin via Manton River to Adelaide River was identified as being a satisfactory alignment. The DMR then mobilised resources and commenced work on this 68-mile section with completion required prior to the 1942 wet season. Bridge construction crews were also mobilised to construct steel girder bridges with concrete decks over the major streams on the road. As this construction work was taking place the location of the road from Adelaide River to Pine Creek and then to Larrimah was being identified.

The Adelaide River to Pine Creek section contained the most difficult terrain. Aerial photographs were taken by Adastra Airways a DMR specialist contractor and then interpreted in DMR head office using the "Azimuth Line Method" developed by the NSW DMR. Plans showing the preferred lines were then sent back to the Territory and pegged by surveyors. This enabled the final alignment to be decided and pegged for construction. The road alignment was finalised by September 1941 and the department was advised by the Military Authorities that they should construct the Adelaide River Katherine section of 145 miles and that SA HD would construct the balance of

115miles to Larrimah. NSW DMR would however construct all bridges required on the alignment from Adelaide River to Larrimah. Thirteen bridges and the timber decking of five high-level railway bridges were included in the works. The 30mile section from Katherine to Maranboy turn-off was reallocated from the SA HD to the Australian Army.

The U S Army 808 Engineer (Aviation) Battalion were despatched from the USA to build facilities for US fighter and bomber groups in the Top End of the Northern Territory. They arrived in Melbourne on 1 February 1942, were then transported by rail to Alice Springs arriving on 15 February. Alice Springs to Larrimah was by the Australian Army convoy system arriving on 18 February. The Battalion was passing through Katherine when the first air raid on Darwin occurred. They were off loaded and did minor local works around Katherine. By 14 April their HQ staff and two Companies were located in Pine Creek where they undertook "minimum grading and drainage and gravel surfacing over bad spots" over 36 miles of the North South road between the 142mile and 178 ½ mile. The unit completed their roadwork on 11 May and commenced airfield work on Pine Creek and Mc Donald airstrips.

The Americans had 3 D8 bulldozers that proved a challenge to transport, the Australian road authorities had D7 size machines and low loaders to transport them. The first D8 was trucked to Larrimah, damaging the trailer, and then walked to Pine Creek; the remaining two were walked 800 miles on a rotating shift basis from Alice Springs to Pine Creek.

The road pavements were initially constructed with gravel, sections adjacent to airstrips and camps were then bitumen sealed by NSW DMR with hot-sprayed bitumen and crushed aggregate wearing surface. The DMR completed the seal of the gravel pavements between Darwin and Adelaide River and Mataranka to Larrimah in 1943 and Adelaide River to the 114mile in 1944.

The Department of Defence decided in late 1941 due to increased traffic, to strengthen the Alice Spring to Larrimah road and provide a bituminous wearing surface. The CRB recommended that three Barber-Greene No.848 heavy-duty mixers be imported from the USA to enable the work to be carried out. Any bitumen used on the project had to be imported into Australia, transported by train to Alice Springs and then trucked in 3½-ton trucks over a rough high maintenance gravel track to where it would finally be applied to the road.

The CRB was allocated the task, however the traffic on the road further increased with the completion of the east west road from the rail head at Mt Isa to north of Tennant Creek. It became necessary to gravel re-sheet the road from the junction of the North South with the Mt Isa road to Larrimah a distance of 234 miles. The CRB re-sheeted 95 miles, SA HD 29 miles, RAE 77 miles, and D of I 33 miles.

The sealing work started in June 1942 north of Tennant Creek with two ½ cubic yard hand fed concrete mixers in one gang and a 21 cubic foot mixer in a second gang, however, two Barber Greene machines soon arrived to

replace the hand fed mixers. The 234 miles was completed by February 1943.

The road from Alice Springs to the Mt Isa turn off was gravel re-sheeted commencing in 1943 with the CRB constructing 141 miles and D of I 190 miles. The CRB then bitumen surfaced the road to Alice Springs, which with



diversions to work on numerous runways, taxiways, and warm up, and dispersal areas on bomber and fighter airstrips, was completed on 13 December 1943.

In addition to design and construction the NSW DMR was responsible for maintenance of the road from the 4-mile Darwin, to the 332-mile Larrimah. To manage this workload in 1943 the Northern Territory Division of the Department of Main Roads was established with Head Office at Hayes Creek, the 117 mile, and "branch offices" at each of the sites being worked on at the time.

The CRB set up major workshops and administrative infrastructure in Tennant Creek to support its operations on the North South Road.

The Northern Territory passed from Military control back to Civil control in 1945. The 32 years from 1946 to 1978 saw the Northern Territory administered by the Department of the Interior with responsibility for construction and maintenance of the Stuart Highway again with the Department of Construction/Works. Initially only maintenance of the pavement was undertaken however in the 1960's minor upgrading commenced. Major upgrading of alignments and drainage structures to the National Highway Standard, funded by the Federal government occurred from 1970 using Contractors and Day Labour crews.

Limited self-government was granted to the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly in July 1978. Since then the highway has been the responsibility of the Department of Transport & Works and more recently the Department of Planning and Infrastructure. In this period, with funding by the Commonwealth Government as part of the National Highway Program, the upgrading of the wartime highway to national highway standard was completed in 1992. Bridges constructed in the 1970's have been upgraded to handle new design axle loadings. Overtaking lanes have been constructed on the Darwin Katherine section of the road.

This article is attributed to the Engineers Australia Heritage Committee and particularly Peter Poole.

ATTACHMENT E

Media Release

Tuesday 4 December 2007



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

Stuart Highway - A Strong Sense of Genuine Pride.

Fifty two heritage enthusiasts and local Territory students attended the successful unveiling of the Engineering Heritage Australia plaque at the entrance of the RAAF base in Winnellie Northern Territory this morning.

Hosted by Engineers Australia and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, the ceremony celebrated the contribution and ingenuity of the engineers, surveyors and workers who helped build the Stuart Highway from its inception in 1870.

Unveiling the plaque, Chief Minister Paul Henderson MLA recognised the importance of engineers in the development of our history and recognized that "loads of sweat and a lot of blood went into the construction of the road."

The Minister challenged the students who attended the ceremony to consider engineering as a career. "The world is your oyster when you become involved in engineering because you can stand back and appreciate what you have achieved." He said.

During the ceremony the theme had a strong sense of pride for all engineers, surveyors and workers involved in the highway construction, past and present.

Speaker, Peter Poole (member of the Engineering Heritage Committee) provided an excellent description of events involving the construction of the Highway. Peter said "many people saw the benefits for improved access and communication especially during WWII. It was the necessity for infrastructure that people responded to with clear determination to succeed." He said.

This unveiling is the first of four ceremonies that will be conducted down the Stuart highway in the next six months. Katherine, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs will also host a similar event.

For further information please contact Bronwyn Russell (Director, Engineers Australia) on 89814137 or 0414894547.



Left: Chief Minister Paul Henderson, Minister Delia Lawrie MLA, Ernie Wanka (Director of Roads Network) and Owen Peake (Engineers Australia President)

ATTACHMENT F



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

3 June 2008

The Honourable Paul Henderson MLA
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory
GPO Box 3146
DARWIN NT 0801

Dear Chief Minister

Stuart Highway North Plaquing Ceremony

On behalf of Engineers Australia Northern Division, we would like to thank you for conducting the unveiling at the ceremony on 4 December. It was particularly fortuitous that the ceremony was conducted in the very early days of your Chief Ministership and therefore one of the early opportunities for you to be seen out and about as Chief Minister.

We were honoured that you were able to participate in the ceremony, knowing how tight your schedule is.

Your participation adds considerable prestige to the engineering heritage work which we are undertaking throughout the Northern Territory. Greater public awareness of this work will increase the interest of Territorians in their history and in turn ease the task of preserving and protecting our built heritage. There is much still to be done and we intend to press on with our heritage recognition program. We hope that you will be able to join with us on future occasions.

Yours sincerely

Bronwyn Russell
Director
Northern Division

Owen Peake
Engineering Heritage Committee
Northern Division



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

3 June 2008

Mr Peter Poole
P O Box 78
Berrimah NT 0828

Dear Peter

Stuart Highway North Plaquing Ceremony

On behalf of Engineers Australia Northern Division, we would like to thank you for your very considerable support for the ceremony on 4 December. You were responsible for almost all of the research and investigation work which went into the nomination. As it turned out the National Plaquing Committee asked a lot of additional questions which greatly complicated the nomination process. You handled all this with efficiency and in the process added even further to our knowledge of the highway.

We were honoured that you were able to participate in the ceremony and thank you for your great assistance.

Such events add considerable prestige to the engineering heritage work which we are undertaking throughout the Northern Territory. Greater public awareness of this work will increase the interest of Territorians in their history and in turn ease the task of preserving and protecting our built heritage. There is much still to be done and we intend to press on with our heritage recognition program.

Yours sincerely

Bronwyn Russell
Director
Northern Division

Owen Peake
Engineering Heritage Committee
Northern Division



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

3 June 2008

Alderman Heather Sjoberg
Darwin City Council
GPO Box 84
DARWIN NT 0801

Dear Alderman

Stuart Highway North Plaquing Ceremony

On behalf of Engineers Australia Northern Division, we would like to thank you for participating in the Stuart Highway heritage plaquing ceremony on 4 December.

We were honoured that you were able to participate in the ceremony, in your role as Acting Lord Mayor, knowing how tight your schedule is.

Your participation adds considerable prestige to the engineering heritage work which we are undertaking throughout the Northern Territory. Greater public awareness of this work will increase the interest of Territorians in their history and in turn ease the task of preserving and protecting our built heritage. There is much still to be done and we intend to press on with our heritage recognition program. We hope that you will be able to join with us on future occasions.

Yours sincerely

Bronwyn Russell
Director
Northern Division

Owen Peake
Engineering Heritage Committee
Northern Division



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

3 June 2008

The Honourable Delia Lawrie MLA
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport
GPO Box 3146
DARWIN NT 0801

Dear Minister

Stuart Highway North Plaquing Ceremony

On behalf of Engineers Australia Northern Division, we would like to thank you for participating in the ceremony on 4 December. Also we would like to record our thanks for the great work done by your department in preparing for the ceremony.

We were honoured that you were able to participate in the ceremony, knowing how tight your schedule is.

Your participation adds considerable prestige to the engineering heritage work which we are undertaking throughout the Northern Territory. Greater public awareness of this work will increase the interest of Territorians in their history and in turn ease the task of preserving and protecting our built heritage. There is much still to be done and we intend to press on with our heritage recognition program. We hope that you will be able to join with us on future occasions.

Yours sincerely

Bronwyn Russell
Director
Northern Division

Owen Peake
Engineering Heritage Committee
Northern Division



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

3 June 2008

His Worship
Robert McLeod
Mayor of Palmerston
P O Box 1
PALMERSTON NT 0830

His Worship

Stuart Highway North Plaquing Ceremony

On behalf of Engineers Australia Northern Division, we would like to thank you for participating in the Stuart Highway heritage plaquing ceremony on 4 December.

We were honoured that you were able to participate in the ceremony and thank you for your great assistance.

Your participation adds considerable prestige to the engineering heritage work which we are undertaking throughout the Northern Territory. Greater public awareness of this work will increase the interest of Territorians in their history and in turn ease the task of preserving and protecting our built heritage. There is much still to be done and we intend to press on with our heritage recognition program. We hope that you will be able to join with us on future occasions.

Yours sincerely

Bronwyn Russell
Director
Northern Division

Owen Peake
Engineering Heritage Committee
Northern Division



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

3 June 2008

Mr Ernie Wanka
Director of Roads Network
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 2520
DARWIN NT 0801

Dear Ernie

Stuart Highway North Plaquing Ceremony

On behalf of Engineers Australia Northern Division, we would like to thank you for your very considerable support for the ceremony on 4 December. You and your colleagues in the department made all the key arrangements for the ceremony. The presentation of the plaque on its slab of Mount Bundy Granite was particularly impressive. All the arrangements were most satisfactory and did great credit to your department.

We were honoured that you were able to participate in the ceremony and thank you for your great assistance.

Such events add considerable prestige to the engineering heritage work which we are undertaking throughout the Northern Territory. Greater public awareness of this work will increase the interest of Territorians in their history and in turn ease the task of preserving and protecting our built heritage. There is much still to be done and we intend to press on with our heritage recognition program.

Yours sincerely

Bronwyn Russell
Director
Northern Division

Owen Peake
Engineering Heritage Committee
Northern Division



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

3 June 2008

The Principal
Dr Michael Meyers
Parap Primary School
P O Box 69
PARAP NT 0804

Dear Dr Meyers

Stuart Highway North Plaquing Ceremony

On behalf of Engineers Australia Northern Division, we would like to thank you for participating in the Stuart Highway heritage plaquing ceremony on 4 December.

We were honoured that you were able to participate in the ceremony. We are impressed that the young people of Darwin are interested in heritage and we hope that their enthusiasm will continue.

Your participation adds considerable prestige to the engineering heritage work which we are undertaking throughout the Northern Territory. Greater public awareness of this work will increase the interest of Territorians in their history and in turn ease the task of preserving and protecting our built heritage. There is much still to be done and we intend to press on with our heritage recognition program. We hope that you will be able to join with us on future occasions.

Yours sincerely

Bronwyn Russell
Director
Northern Division

Owen Peake
Engineering Heritage Committee
Northern Division



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA
Northern Division

3 June 2008

The Principal
Mrs Marion Guppy
Darwin High School
Bullocky Point
DARWIN NT 0800

Dear Mrs Guppy

Stuart Highway North Plaquing Ceremony

On behalf of Engineers Australia Northern Division, we would like to thank you for participating in the Stuart Highway heritage plaquing ceremony on 4 December.

We were honoured that you were able to participate in the ceremony. We are impressed that the young people of Darwin are interested in heritage and we hope that their enthusiasm will continue.

Your participation adds considerable prestige to the engineering heritage work which we are undertaking throughout the Northern Territory. Greater public awareness of this work will increase the interest of Territorians in their history and in turn ease the task of preserving and protecting our built heritage. There is much still to be done and we intend to press on with our heritage recognition program. We hope that you will be able to join with us on future occasions.

Yours sincerely

Bronwyn Russell
Director
Northern Division

Owen Peake
Engineering Heritage Committee
Northern Division

ATTACHMENT G

ATTACHMENT H

ATTACHMENT I

National engineering landmark in Darwin

ENGINEERING HERITAGE AUSTRALIA, an interest group of Engineers Australia, recently held a national engineering landmark plaquing ceremony south of Darwin for one of Australia's most famous and strategic highways, Stuart Highway North, or "The Track" as it is colloquially termed in the Northern Territory.

The history of the Stuart Highway, which runs from Adelaide north through Alice Springs to Darwin, extends back to the original surveys in the mid nineteenth century by outback explorer John McDouall Stuart. A decade later the Overland Telegraph was completed, which mostly followed Stuart's survey.

Construction of a proper road, Stuart Highway North, started in 1940, just before war broke out in the Pacific. Work continued throughout the war and by the end of hostilities the 1500km road between Alice Springs and Darwin was completed and sealed.

The wartime road's labour was resourced from road authorities around Australia, the Australian Army and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (808th Engineer Aviation Battalion – which also built airfields).

The heritage marker was placed in front of the RAAF gates at Darwin, where the original Stuart Highway alignment passed and where it is safe for travellers to exit the highway and read the plaque.

Another highlight of plaquing ceremonies last year was declaring the now decommissioned High Flux Australian Reactor (HIFAR) a national engineering landmark. Constructed



School children from nearby Parap Primary School, roads engineer and historian for the marking project Peter Poole and NT roads minister Delia Lawrie celebrate the Stuart Highway North becoming a national engineering landmark.

between 1956 and 1958 HIFAR provided training for several generations of nuclear engineers and scientists, and enabled Australia to pioneer many of the applications of nuclear science and technology to industry, medicine and education. ■